Impact of closure of coal mines on workers

4181. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to ciose down several coal mines in various subsidiaries in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons and justification for making closure of coal mines in the country;

(d) the number of workers to be affected by such a decision; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to protect the interests of workers and also to ensure smooth production of coal?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) to (e) Closing mining activities in coal mines and opening of new coal mines is an ongoing process. Depending on parameters like exhaustion of coal reserves, economic viability of the coal mines, safety consideration, technical feasibility, ability of the coal company to redeploy the workers in a more viable mine etc., operational decisions are taken by the coal companies to close mining activities in some mines and also to open some new mines. 53 coal mines have been identified by the subsidiary coal companies of Coal India Limited for suspension of operation in a phased manner.The location of tnese mines, company-wise and State-wise, and reasons for suspension are as under:—

Company	West Bengal	Jharkhand	Reasons for the proposed suspension of operation
Eastern Coalfields Ltd. Bharat	23	3 15	Economically unviable
Coking Coal Ltd. Central		12	Economically unviable
Coalfields Ltd.			Eccnomically unviable
TOTAL :	23	30	

However, Government have stated on several occasions that workmen

will not be retrenched on account of closure of mines or suspension of mining operations but will be suitably redeployed.

Handing over surplus mining blocks to private entrepreneurs by CIL

4182. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether CIL has been criticised for not handing over surplus mining blocks to private entrepreneurs;

(b) if so, whether to sustain the projected coal production in the next few years, there is a need to hand over surplus mining blocks to private entrepreneurs; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Coal India Limited and its subsidiaries have identified 121 blocks/sub-blocks and Singareni Collieries Company Limited has identified 7 blocks, totally 128 blocks, have been identified for allocation to public/private sector for captive mining. While out of the above blocks 27 blocks have been allotted so far, mining of coal has started in 4 blocks.

Removal of coal mafia from coal mines

4183. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to crack down on coal mafia who are active in various coal mines;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether fake coal linkage companies have also been identified recently;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken to remove coal mafia from various coal mines?

THE MINISTER OF COAL (SHRI KARIYA MUNDA): (a) and (b) Whenever reports of any irregularities are received, the Government and the coal companies take necessary corrective measures. The measures taken to check the irregularities are as follows :